Decorative, Disposable Trash and/or Recycle Receptacle Covers

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Claim of Priority

This application is a claims priority of U.S. Serial No. 60/429,678 **Decorative, Disposable Trash and/or Recycle Receptacle Slip Covers** filed November 26, 2002.

Field of the Invention

The present invention is directed to a novel trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip. In particular, the present invention is directed to a novel trash or recycle receptacle cover or slip which can be easily placed and then replaced, and which may be decorative or include advertising.

Background of the Invention

Trash and/or recycle receptacles are a common feature at public locations such as parks, beaches, subways, schools, airports, ballparks, city sidewalks, sports arenas, concert halls and the like. Trash and/or recycle receptacles are also a common feature at homes during parties, picnics, cookouts and the like.

Frequently, these necessary implements are an eyesore which detract from the environment in which they are located and may present an unpleasing and unappetizing presence.

Heretofore, there have been a number of prior art devices and systems which facilitate the decoration or covering of various waste receptacles. U.S. Patent No. 5,865,407 discloses a disposable cover for tray jacks and waste containers. These covers have an aesthetically pleasing segment which conceals the tray jack or container and a second, integral segment. In tray jack applications of the invention, the integral segment provides a receptacle for trash and other wastes. And, in container applications of the invention, the second, integral segment provides an inner liner for the container which is discarded with the trash.

U.S. Patent No. 5,709,312 discloses an adjustable, flexible cover for a container such as trash or garbage receptacle comprising a flexible film which is impervious to water and odors, and which has a central portion bounded by a peripheral edge to cover the top opening of the trash receptacle whereas the peripheral edge contacts the sidewall or walls of the receptacle. The cover further has an adhesive sealing member which gathers the peripheral edge of the film to seal the top opening against the intrusion of precipitation and the leakage of odors. Optionally, the top surface of the central portion may include indicia such as holiday or sports designs. An alternative embodiment relates to a flexible bag having an adhesive sealing member on the peripheral edge thereof for application of the bag edge to the external side of the container.

U.S. Patent No. 6,062,412 is directed to a container cover for use with different types of containers such as garbage cans and storage receptacles. The cover includes a waterproof, stretchable material fitting over the mouth of the container, regardless of the size and shape of the mouth. The cover is sufficiently long so as to extend beneath handles on the side of the container. Fasteners are provided to secure the base of the cover to the side of the container, the cover having notches for the container's handles to be easily grasped by someone wanting to lift or move the container. The portion of the cover extending over the mouth of the container includes an openable closure which allows the user to place objects in the container when the closure is opened, and to keep them from being spilled or gotten at when the closure is closed.

U.S. Patent No. 5,129,535 discloses a trash container including a base container portion and a cover. The base container portion includes a front wall, a rear wall and two sidewalls all extending upwardly from a bottom surface to an upper rim defining an open top. The sidewall is provided with outboard ribs having inboard beads thereon. The other sidewall is provided with inboard ribs having outboard beads thereon. The beads engage the beads of a like container to attach the container to the like container. The cover has a peripheral rim made up of a front U-shaped ledge and a rear U-shaped ledge. A generally horizontal opening is formed within the rear U-shaped ledge and a trash-receiving ramp is positioned below the opening. A hood extends upwardly from the front U-shaped ledge and defines a second opening which extends partially above the opening. Trash placed on ramp will thus pass through the opening and into the base container portion.

U.S. Patent No. 5,004,114 is directed to a trash container with a tightly secured cover is provided in which a first engaging structure disposed on outer surface about an open top of a pail interlocks with a second engaging structure disposed on inner surface of a depending skirt of the cover to tightly secure the cover to the open top of the pail so that it will prevent an animal from entering through the open top and eat the trash therein.

While the above prior art systems each comprise trash or waste receptacle covers, none provide an effective and easy to apply solution for improving on the aesthetic appeal of entire exterior of said trash and/or recycle containers or receptacles,, while still allowing said trash and/or recycle containers or receptacle, to remain fully functional and easily accessible, all present various problems in that they are complicated to place and remove and may be costly, and may interfere with the proper operation of trash and/or recycle receptacles. Further, while the above prior art systems each comprise trash or waste receptacle covers, none allow for the complete covering up or decorating of trash and/or recycle containers or receptacle, from top of containers to bottom, while still allowing said containers to remain fully functional and accessible, with or without the use an inner bag/liner. Prior art embodiments such as shown in U.S. Patent No. 5,865, 407 comprise an inner trash liner that must be discarded when the trash is emptied each time, thus requiring the replacement of an entire new system, each time.

It would be desirable to provide an easy to use trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip which would be easy to place and remove, would assist in keeping refuse in the receptacle, which is separate from and NOT connected to an inner liner, would permit the easy placement and removal of standard commercial plastic liners and the

like during use, without the need to completely remove or dispose of said cover or slip, would allow said trash and/or recycle receptacles to be used with or without an inner liner , and would allow for a limitless choice of decorations, designs or advertising.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip which can be easily placed over a trash and/or recycle receptacle and then be easily removed.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip which can be utilized to improve the appearance of said trash and/or recycle receptacles.

It is further object of the present invention to provide a trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip which can easily facilitate the removal of trash or refuse without the need to completely remove the cover.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a trash and/or recycle receptacle cover or slip which can include advertising, art and/or decoration.

These and other objects of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description which follows.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides a printed, light-weight, disposable (and/or re-usable) outer liner, comprising a flexible film which is impervious to water and odors, and preferably with a resilient elastomeric loop at both ends. The system is designed to slip over the exterior of a variety of trash/garbage, can, receptacles/wastebaskets and recycling containers and provide a fashionable, decorative, festive or formal temporary

covering for the typically unsightly trash, garbage and recycling cans, receptacles and wastebaskets.

In accordance with the present invention a novel trash and/or recycle receptacle covering and decoration is disclosed. The invention comprises a tube designed to fit over and cover a trash and/or recycle receptacle; and having at one end, a first stretchable elastomeric loop affixed to the tube, and which secures to the opening of the trash and/or recycle receptacle and which defines an orifice for trash.

In a further embodiment, the invention comprises a novel trash and/or recycle receptacle covering and decoration comprising: a tube designed to fit over and cover a trash and/or recycle receptacle; and having at a first end, a first affixing means for affixing the first end of the tube to the opening of the trash and/or recycle receptacle and which defines an orifice for trash, said affixing means further creating an annular ledge which tends to keep trash within the receptacle; and a second affixing means attached to the second end of the tube for securing the tube to the bottom of the trash and/or recycle receptacle.

In still a further embodiment, the invention comprises a novel trash and/or recycle receptacle covering and decoration comprising: a decorated tube designed to fit over and cover a trash and/or recycle receptacle; and having at a first end, a first elastomeric loop for affixing the first end of the tube over the opening of the trash and/or recycle receptacle and which defines an orifice for trash, said first elastomeric loop further creating an annular ledge which tends to keep trash within the receptacle; and a second elastomeric loop attached to the second end of the tube for securing the tube to the bottom of the trash and/or recycle receptacle.

Brief Description of the Figures

Figure 1 is a side perspective view of the present invention

Figures 2 and 2b illustrate top views of the alternative embodiments of the invention.

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the present invention as pulled downward to facilitate easy removal of a trash bag liner.

Figure 4 is an isolated view of the alternative tie string embodiment.

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the present invention in a fully operational mode.

Detailed Description of the Device

The present invention is shown and is described with reference to the enclosed Figures wherein the same numbers are utilized where applicable. The principal function of the present invention is to eliminate the need for users to hide unsightly but necessary trash and garbage or recycle receptacles and/or recycling bins during formal or casual events, including but not limited to parties, holidays, events, etc. The potential uses of the present invention are almost limitless and include private entities, individuals, as well as public and governmental entities such as sidewalks, sports arenas, concert halls, parks, airports, beaches, subways and schools. The present invention covers both single use and reusable embodiments.

The present invention is especially adapted for use by business organizations as a new and affordable tool to effectively advertise, market and/or promote their various

products, brands, events, logos, etc. The designs, colors and themes, which may be utilized in the present invention, are limitless.

As shown in the Figures, the present invention broadly comprises a hollow slip/cover comprising a flexible film which is impervious to water and odors, and specifically designed to cover up, dress up, decorate or enhance the unsightly exteriors of trash receptacles and recycling receptacles, and transforming any and all such items into fashionable or decorative fully accessible receptacles. Referring to the Figures, the present invention is specifically directed to a novel trash and/or recycle receptacle decoration system. In the first embodiment, the invention comprises a tube 12 comprising a paper, cloth or plastic (or combination), having a first and second open end 14a, 14b which envelopes and surrounds a trash and/or recycle receptacle from both ends. The cover may be made of a wide variety of polymeric materials of the type used to make trash can liners or bags. The invention further envisions a wider variety of material usages and thicknesses.

In one embodiment, the tube has an elastomeric loop 16a, 16b loop at each opening, which fits over its mouth of the trash and/or recycle receptacle 10 and which is pulled downward to the bottom of the receptacle 10a. The elastomeric loop can comprise any resilient elastomeric material. The top elastomeric loop 16a, when pulled over the trash and/or recycle receptacle forms a donut shaped annular ledge 17 over the mouth of the trash and/or recycle receptacle which permits trash to be put in the middle of the hole and which tends to prevent trash from coming out of the sides of the receptacle. The bottom elastomeric loop 16b secures at or near the bottom of the receptacle 10.

The expandable and contractible elastomeric loop element uniquely allows the invention to fit all different shapes and sizes of receptacles (e.g., round, square, short, tall, etc.) and to remain secure in all types of weather and on a variety of ground surfaces, e.g. grass, concrete, tile, etc.

The bottom elastomeric loop 16b allows the invention to be utilized, even with receptacles that may have wheels on their bottom or are contiguous with or attached to the ground. Also, the bottom elastomeric loop 16b allows the invention to remain secure to the bottom of the receptacle but also without touching the ground, thus keeping the product clean and re-usable.

Due to the tube-like design of the present invention, it can be imprinted with a random pattern, eliminating the concern over which end is the top and which is the bottom of the cover. The present invention can be applied over the receptacle at either end; i.e., either sliding it downward from the top of the receptacle 10, or sliding it on upwards from the bottom of the receptacle 10.

As shown in Figure 3, one of the features of the present invention is that it allows the trash bag liner 19 to be easily changed. Figure 3 represents a receptacle 10 with the invention on grass 21. When the trash and/or recycle receptacle is filled, the top elastomeric end of the tube 16a is pulled outwardly and partially down the side of receptacle 10a. An interior liner 19 can therefore be easily removed and replaced. The elastomeric loop 16a end at opening 14a can then be pulled back over the top and re-secured and thus recreating the annular ledge 17. Figure 5 illustrates the present invention with advertisement 23 in an operational mode.

While the present invention has been described in the context of elastomeric loops 16a, 16b, it is to be appreciated that the invention suggests other attachment embodiments. Figure 4 illustrates an adjustable tie string embodiment 18 which may be mechanically tightened and loosened to permit the tube 12 to be placed over and secured to the receptacle.

It is to be appreciated that the cover of the present invention can have a number of decorative designs. It can include advertising, unique colors and shapes, holiday motifs, and can also be colored to blend into the background for homes and residential areas. It can also have a camouflage motif so that it blends into the background with trees and shrubbery. When the cover is no longer useful or needed, it can be easily pulled off the trash and/or recycle receptacle and discarded.

The present invention has been described with reference to the enclosed figures. It is to be appreciated that the true nature and scope of the present invention is to be determined with reference to the claims appended hereto.